

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 05880

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, FR, GW
SUBJECT: GERMAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC REACTIONS TO
FRENCH ELECTIONS

1. AN SPD OFFICIAL WHO HAS RECENTLY RETURNED FROM PARIS SAID THAT THE SPD WAS QUITE PLEASED WITH THE OUTCOME OF THE FRENCH ELECTIONS. THE OFFICIAL SAID THAT THE SPD HAS MAINTAINED OFFICIAL SILENCE FOR OBVIOUS REASONS, INCLUDING THE DISAPPOINTMENT OF THE PS AT NOT HAVING DONE BETTER. HOWEVER, THE OFFICIAL SAID, THE SPD BELIEVES FAILURE OF THE LEFT TO REACH ITS ANTICIPATED VOTER GOALS WOULD HAVE THE EFFECT OF BREAKING UP THE UNION OF THE LEFT AND THAT THIS WOULD BE A GOOD THING.

2. ACCORDING TO THIS OFFICIAL, THE SPD HOPED THAT THE PS WOULD NOW TURN MORE TOWARD THE CENTER AND WOULD TRY LESS TO COMPETE WITH THE PCF FOR THE LEFT WING VOTES. PUTTING IT ANOTHER WAY, THE SPD OFFICIAL THOUGHT THE PS MIGHT NOW FEEL PREPARED OR EVEN COMPELLED TO TRY TO REACH A GROUP OF VOTERS SOMEWHAT SIMILAR TO THAT WHICH THE SPD RELIED ON IN GERMANY. THE SPD OFFICIAL ADDED
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THAT SEVERAL PS OFFICIALS HAD IMPLIED TO THE SPD THAT THEY MIGHT BE PREPARED TO TAKE STEPS IN THIS DIRECTION. HOWEVER, THE PS HAD EXPRESSED SOME CONCERN TO THE SPD ABOUT THE EFFECT THAT THIS MIGHT HAVE ON ITS OWN LEFT WING, AND ABOUT THE DANGER OF A SPLIT WITHIN THE PARTY.

3. COMMENT: THE VIEW OF THIS SPD OFFICIAL, LIKE THAT

OF OTHERS, IS OF COURSE INFLUENCED BY THE FEAR THAT A UNION OF THE LEFT GOVERNMENT IN FRANCE WOULD HAVE MADE IT EASIER FOR THE OPPOSITION IN GERMANY TO PAINT THE SPD AS A LEFT WING PARTY. IT SHOULD BE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT NOT ALL SPD LEADERS FEEL THIS WAY. FOR EXAMPLE, WILLY BRANDT DURING HIS RECENT VISIT TO HUNGARY REPORTEDLY MADE SOME POSITIVE REMARKS ABOUT THE "PROGRESSIVE FORCES" IN THE WORLD, ASSOCIATING THE SOCIALISTS AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATS WITH COMMUNIST PARTIES (BUDAPEST 1249).
STOESSEL

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